

contingency. In fact, Gates said that even if he had \$50 billion more to spend, he would not buy any more F-22s.

The Air Force leadership itself no longer supports continued production of the F-22. Air Force Secretary Michael Donley and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz have publicly said they would prefer to move on. The plane is not in the Defense Department's proposed budget for fiscal 2010 (which begins in October). It's not even on the Air Force's list of unfunded requests, which consists of items excluded from the budget for which it would nevertheless like funding—a wish list of sorts.

Why are congressional committees willing to override the military and civilian leadership of the Pentagon on the F-22? The latest in a string of arguments offered by proponents in Congress is the need to protect our industrial base—as if our technical capacity to develop and produce fighter planes is in immediate, grave danger. This argument overlooks the fact that the Obama administration's fiscal 2010 budget includes 28 F-35 Joint Strike Fighters—planes better suited for air-to-ground combat.

Moreover, as has been noted by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Adm. Mike Mullen, the era of producing manned aircraft is coming to an end. Mullen correctly points out that there will be a shift toward unmanned aircraft.

The F-22 is not an isolated case of unnecessary congressional equipment purchases. Congress has added \$2.7 billion to the 2009 supplemental budget to buy more C-17 and C-130 aircraft—planes neither requested nor needed by the Defense Department. It also added \$600 million to the 2010 budget for an unneeded alternate engine for the F-35, which will mean buying 50 fewer aircraft.

An administration policy statement issued on June 24 said the president's senior advisers would recommend a veto of a bill containing funding for more F-22s. If the entire Congress approves either of the armed services committees' recommendations on the F-22, President Obama should indeed veto the bill. Only then will Congress get the message that in this era of exploding national debt, we cannot waste billions on unnecessary military equipment.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1469

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, on behalf of myself and Senator MCCAIN, I send an amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Michigan [Mr. LEVIN], for himself and Mr. MCCAIN, proposes an amendment numbered 1469.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To strike \$1,750,000,000 in Procurement, Air Force funding for F-22A aircraft procurement, and to restore operation and maintenance, military personnel, and other funding in divisions A and B that was reduced in order to authorize such appropriation)

At the end of subtitle A of title I, add the following:

SEC. 106. ELIMINATION OF F-22A AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT FUNDING.

(a) ELIMINATION OF FUNDING.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by section 103(1) for procurement for the Air Force for aircraft procurement is hereby decreased by \$1,750,000,000, with the amount of the decrease to be derived from amounts available for F-22A aircraft procurement.

(b) RESTORED FUNDING.—

(1) OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, ARMY.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by section 301(1) for operation and maintenance for the Army is hereby increased by \$350,000,000.

(2) OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, NAVY.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by section 301(2) for operation and maintenance for the Navy is hereby increased by \$100,000,000.

(3) OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, AIR FORCE.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by section 301(4) for operation and maintenance for the Air Force is hereby increased by \$250,000,000.

(4) OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, DEFENSE-WIDE.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by section 301(5) for operation and maintenance for Defense-wide activities is hereby increased by \$150,000,000.

(5) MILITARY PERSONNEL.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by section 421(a)(1) for military personnel is hereby increased by \$400,000,000.

(6) DIVISION A AND DIVISION B GENERALLY.—In addition to the amounts specified in paragraphs (1) through (5), the total amount authorized to be appropriated for the Department of Defense by divisions A and B is hereby increased by \$500,000,000.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, this amendment is the F-22 amendment, which would delete the \$1.75 billion in the bill that was added in a very close vote in the Armed Services Committee, with strong opposition of the administration.

I may say that this is not the first administration that has attempted to end the F-22 line. President Bush also attempted to end this line at 183 planes.

Unless my friend from Arizona wants to speak, I will ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess until 1 p.m.

Mr. MCCAIN. No, I will not speak.

RECESS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess until 1 p.m.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:01 p.m., recessed until 1 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. HAGAN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010—Continued

AMENDMENT NO. 1469

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, the pending amendment Senator MCCAIN and I have offered would strike the \$1.75 billion that was added to the bill by a very close vote in committee to purchase additional F-22 aircraft that the military does not want, that the Secretary of Defense does not want, that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and all the Joint Chiefs do not want, that President Bush did not want, that the prior Chairman of the Joint Chiefs did not want, and they all say the same thing: The expenditure of these funds jeopardizes other programs which are important, and they provide aircraft we do not need.

These are fairly powerful statements from our leaders, both civilian and military leaders, in this country. I hope the Senate will heed them and reverse the action that was taken on a very close vote in the Armed Services Committee.

We received a few minutes ago a letter from the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. A letter is on its way also from the President. When I get that letter, I will, of course, read the President's letter. But for the time being, let me start with the letter we have received from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, as well as the Secretary of Defense, because it is succinct. It is to the point. It states the case for not adding additional F-22s as well as anything I have seen.

Dear Senators Levin and McCain: We are writing to express our strong objection to the provisions in the Fiscal Year 2010 National Defense Authorization Act allocating \$1.75 billion for seven additional F-22s. I believe it is critically important to complete the F-22 buy at 187—the program of record since 2005, plus four additional aircraft.

There is no doubt that the F-22 is an important capability for our Nation's defense. To meet future scenarios, however, the Department of Defense has determined that 187 aircraft are sufficient, especially considering the future roles of Unmanned Aerial Systems and the significant number of 5th generation Stealth F-35s coming on-line in our combat air portfolio.

It is important to note that the F-35 is a half generation newer aircraft than the F-22, and more capable in a number of areas such as electronic warfare and combating enemy air defenses. To sustain U.S. overall air dominance, the Department's plan is to buy roughly 500 F-35s over the next five years and more than 2,400 over the life of the program.

Furthermore, under this plan, the U.S. by 2020 is projected to have some 2,500 manned fighter aircraft. Almost 1,100 of them will be 5th generation F-35s and F-22s. China, by contrast, is expected to have only slightly more than half as many manned fighter aircraft by 2010, none of them 5th generation.

The F-22 program proposed in the President's budget reflects the judgment of two different Presidents, two different Secretaries of Defense, three chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the current secretary and chief of staff of the Air Force.

If the Air Force is forced to buy additional F-22s beyond what has been requested, it will